

PART II



In the boardroom, The Publisher Douglas McGregor relived every detail of *last* week's executive session.

The meeting had started well: they liked the embossed notepad holders, and the flashlight pens were a big hit. The candy dishes were half-empty by 9:45.

But as he spoke, they listened impassively. No one even cracked a smile at the clip art of the duck hitting a computer with an axe.

Soon he realized the bitter truth; they were just a bunch of yes-men. The kind of yes-men who waited for the Chairman to tell them what to think.

These were the soulless MBA types who had taken over the business.

Metrics, he thought with a sneer: as long as the Company was profitable, gaining market share and winning national critics' awards, *they'd* be happy.



I couldn't believe it.

With the clunk of the deadlock still echoing, Ken seemed to reach for a book. Instead, *the entire bookcase* moved, opening like a door into a second inner room.

His study had a study! A secret chamber, smaller and more simply furnished with a desk, chair and sofa.

Suddenly the odd shape of their dining room made *perfect sense*.

I stared in wonder at the tufted Récamier in tobacco-brown leather. "Wow, a 450-nailhead George Smith" I enthused. "I didn't know they made these anymore."

"They don't," Ken said simply, with pride and resignation in his voice.



In less than an hour, Ken sketched out a complete secret history for me:

— Long ago, before radio and TV, when doctors went by their last names, the new field of *mindology* was born. At first, there were many branches, disciplines and theories.

And even though it was a science, there was a lot of *disagreement* about who was right.

Eventually two schools emerged. One was led by Dr. Sigmund Freud, who believed in gaining *wisdom* by studying the *unconscious*. The other group called themselves *Behaviorists*; they believed in *controlling* people by treating them like *lab rats*. The race was on, and the competition was fierce.

Now, as if his oddball name wasn't enough of a handicap, Sigmund Freud had the disadvantage of living far away in Vienna, Austria. Meanwhile, the Behaviorists were based right in the USA and had simple names and lots of money. So Behaviorism won out.

Ever since, Freudians have been marginalized, harassed by a semi-secret evil society called APA. The APA took control of annual meetings and ran them with an iron fist. Freudians had to give their papers in small, overheated rooms—usually in parallel with the welcome reception and open bar.

“That is *so not fair*,” I exclaimed. “Somebody should try to stop them!”

Ken looked me in the eye. “Somebody *has* been trying: The Unconscious.”



The Unconscious was a secret society that protected Freudian theory from the Behaviorists. And, Dan, you'll never guess who has led The Unconscious for the past 30 years: *Ken Davidson!*

Disguised as a TV mindologist, Ken had worked his way into the inner circles of the APA. Over the years, he'd deflected most of their assaults on the Truth—but he never managed to give Freudians the upper hand.

"It's been tough" he concluded. "They get smarter every year. Let people have a little rock 'n' roll, or some 'language, violence, and nudity.' Just enough to keep them complacent."

I was indignant. "Why can't they just let us have an Unconscious and be happy?"

Ken gave me a steely look. "Is *that* what life is about? 'Happy'?"



What on earth was he talking about?

“No, there’s more than ‘happy,’” Ken continued.

“Our life is suspended among three drives: to join with The Other, to destroy The Other, to become The Other,” he explained. “Freud called these drives Sex, Death, and Copycatting.”

“Stands to reason,” I agreed.

He gestured toward shelves of leather-bound books with titles in Austrian. “Who *knows* what power—and what suffering—we might find in The Unconscious?”

Whatever.



Ken folded up his hand-drawn APA organization chart. “Maybe they’re right,” he snorted. “Maybe it’s better for people to be cheerful, instead of wise.”

He stared upward, as if he noticed a cobweb. *Who does the cleaning in a secret chamber, anyway?* “All these years as an infiltrator. And now I’m old.”

How ironic. I thought. *This man has helped so many OTHERS: but now HE needs help.*

“That’s a bummer,” I comforted. “You know; your life’s work down the tubes and everything.”

“Bummer,” he repeated quietly. “Down the tubes.”

He said it again. “Bummer . . . down the tubes,” his face brightening this time. And again, with a chuckle, and again.

With every “*Bummer . . . down the tubes*” he looked and sounded younger and stronger. Soon we were both laughing and slapping each other on the back.

Ken put his arm over my shoulders. Wiping a tear—of laughter!—from his eye, he said “*It wasn’t wasted, was it? We fought the Good Fight, and we kept The Unconscious alive.*”

“But it really burns me to picture my obituary,” he added—“Kenneth Davidson: Longtime Host of TV’s *Have a Nice Day.*”



Unlocking the door, Ken admonished,
“Remember your oath of secrecy.”

“Scout’s honor,” I swore.

Then I added, “Now, wouldn’t you like to give me
some kind of clue or puzzle to follow up on?”

That look of sorrow crossed his face again, but
just for a moment. “Okay, okay, here’s one: *you
can call me anything, but don’t call me late for
breakfast.*”

“Nah, you’ve told me that one before.”

“How about this, then: *Katie necessary on a
bicycle?*”



The Publisher sat slumped at the table, methodically pressing every button on the remote to see what the projector would do. He was still reliving last week's meeting.

Oh Douglas, he said to himself, Why did things unravel as soon as you got to your grand plan?

"In the three weeks before *The Da Vinci Code* opens," he'd explained, "we flood the market with *twenty* new titles.

"Every one on the same themes as *Da Vinci Code*, and every one with an *infringement lawsuit* against *Dan Brown*. Here's week one."

ANNOUNCEMENT STRATEGY: First Week

- Mon - *The Magdalene Mystery*
- Tue - *The Louvre Labyrinth*
- Wed - *Opus Pocus*
- Thu - *The Code of Codes*
- Fri - *Cryptogram in the Crypt*
- Sat - *The Leonardo Catalog Raisonne*
- Sun - *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*
[re-issue]

COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL

His publicist broke in: "The press is mesmerized: news conferences and stories *every day*. Lines at the bookstores as far as you can see. The public is devouring the new books, arguing the merits of the infringement cases—they forget there even *was* a da Vinci movie."

The meeting ran another two hours, but they never got past that slide.



Our two-day visit complete, we rode down the Davidsons' long driveway. It was a partly sunny morning, with winds about 10 knots from the west-northwest.

"Did you get any help from my father?" Kate asked.

"Did I ever," I said, pulling the yellow highlighter partway from my shirt pocket for her to see.

A few miles later she asked "Did he go into his whole *shtick*? The one about Sex and Death and everything?"

"Uh, yeah, he did. But I'm sworn to secrecy."

So she knew too!

"He also gave me a clue to work on: *Katie necessary on a bicycle*. What could *that* mean?"

She turned her face away. "Oh look" she said, feigned cheer in her voice. "*SLOW CHILDREN*: don't you just love that sign?"

Tears were streaming down her face.

"Did I say something wrong?" I asked.

She composed herself. "I guess it's time you knew."



From infancy, Kate explained, she had displayed a highly developed Copycat Instinct. By age two she could recite *Madeleine* flawlessly, acting out the illustrations along the way.

When she was three, her mother Isabelle told her a joke to test her abilities:

“Knock knock.”

“Who’s there?”

“Isabelle.”

“Isabelle who?”

“Is a bell necessary on a bicycle?”

Within minutes, the little one was chirping:

*“Knock knock. . . Who’s there?. . . Katie...
Katie who?. . . Katie necessary on a bicycle?”*

At age four, she could follow her mother or father, repeating everything they said, for days on end. Where most parents would be annoyed, Ken and Isabelle were enchanted by her copycatting.

The child’s promise blossomed in memorization, language skills, and musical talent. In summer camp productions of Gilbert and Sullivan, she mastered the lead roles with ease.

Ken was proud and hopeful: with Kate as a perfect embodiment of the Copycat Instinct, the Freudians could bring The Unconscious back into the limelight!



Then tragedy struck.

At 16, after a long bout with mononucleosis, Kate returned to good health. But they started to see a difference in her behavior. Once a cute exception, little misfires like *Katie necessary* were now the rule.

Kate developed a habit of giving away punch lines early in jokes. Misremembering ad slogans and TV sitcoms—or not even noticing them. Inadvertently correcting the lyrics of pop tunes: “He doesn’t love you, as I love you,” she sang.

The diagnosis was clear and final: illness had seriously damaged Kate’s inner Copycat.

Ken was crushed: the Freudian cause was set back a generation or more. And Kate would have only intelligence, organizational skills, and good looks to see her through life.

At lunch that day, she said “Daddy, we saw the silliest billboard—*Easter is the season. And Jesus is why.*” And Ken’s eyes had welled with tears.

Now I understood everything.



In an East Village dressing room, the young woman turned to the mirror. She admired herself in the knee-high Doctor Martens, leather skirt, black lace and denim.

*A minute ago, she thought, I was Angela. Now I am **Anima!***

Looking at the tags, she made a quick mental calculation. *I can buy the whole getup, she thought, and still have enough left for a knockoff Burberry bag.*



It was a quiet flight back.

Finished with Braudel, Kate was now halfway through John Keegan's *The First World War*—a classic blockbuster that inspired literally thousands of books, plays, and movies in its time.

After takeoff, I watched at the window for the thrilling sight of Windsor, Ontario—*looking south toward Canada from the U.S.!* Then I pulled down the shade and tried to nap.

But Ken's words whirled in my head.

Power—

Suffering—

Late for breakfast—



The great bearded man reflected on his impending glory. Days earlier, he had gathered his cadres in secret for a surprise announcement.

He started the meeting in the usual way: “In the name of the . . . Brother Zak, can you unplug from your iPod for just a few minutes? *Thank* you.”

Resuming, “In the name of the *Id*, and of the *Ego*, and of the *Superego*, I call this meeting of The 92nd Street Unconscious to order,” he intoned with his usual little laugh.

Brother Zak rolled his eyes.

“Let me come right to the point,” he’d said. “I’ve been reviewing manuscripts that my daughter intercepts for me. I believe I have found *The One*. An author named Jack Russell: he seems to be the Perfect Unconscious Copycat.”

He held up a hand to calm the hubbub: “Now, so far, I’ve only seen an early draft,” he cautioned: “but Jack Russell’s *Buonorotti Anagram* may well be the book we’ve been waiting for.”

Armed with this new evidence, The Unconscious would overturn the established order at the next annual meeting.

And the great bearded man would be elected President of the APA.



Dan, it's *ironic*—

Most people have never even *heard* of Dr. Sigmund Freud. Yet his influence is everywhere, if you just know how to look.

Ever make a Freudian slip? That's him: Dr. Sigmund Freud invented the *Freudian* slip.

How about “rationalizing”? Did you know that Sigmund Freud was the first person to rationalize?

Or take those real estate articles, where they say a developer has an “edifice complex.” You can thank Dr. Sigmund Freud again (what he *really* said was that builders have an “Oedipus Rex” complex).

And when people talk about the ego—as in “boy, does that guy have an *ego!*”—well, guess who coined *that* word. Dr. Sigmund Freud, at your service!

And don't blush, but here's another word he came up with: *libidinous*.

END OF PART II